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EXAMINER

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ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2623

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 05-05-06 has been entered.

Response to Amendment

2. This office action is in response to communications filed 06-23-06. Claims 1, 43, 54, 60, 72 have been amended. Claims 2-5, 22-30, 36-42, 44-53, 55-59, 61-71, 73-79 are original. Claims 6, 7, 16, 18 are cancelled. Claims 10-15, 17, 19-21, 31-35 are previously presented.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Priority

4. The Disclosure filed April 26, 2001 discloses a copending application, 09/843,589, which is also listed in the Oath and Declaration filed August 22, 2001. The application 09/843,589 is listed by its title in the disclosure of the instant application. The application 09/843,589 does not have the same inventive entity nor does it have one of the same inventors as the instant application. The disclosure does not disclose whether the application is a divisional. Clarification is required.

If applicant desires to claim the benefit of a prior-filed application under 35 U.S.C. 120, a specific reference to the prior-filed application in compliance with 37 CFR 1.78(a) must be included in the first sentence(s) of the specification following the title or in an application data sheet. For benefit claims under 35 U.S.C. 120, 121 or 365(c), the reference must include the relationship (i.e., continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part) of the applications.

If the instant application is a utility or plant application filed under 35 U.S.C. 111(a) on or after November 29, 2000, the specific reference must be submitted during the pendency of the application and within the later of four months from the actual filing date of the application or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior application. If the application is a utility or plant application which entered the national stage from an international application filed on or after November 29, 2000, after compliance with 35 U.S.C. 371, the specific reference must be submitted during the pendency of the application and within the later of four months from the date on which the national stage

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commenced under 35 U.S.C. 371(b) or (f) or sixteen months from the filing date of the prior application. See 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2)(ii) and (a)(5)(ii). This time period is not extendable and a failure to submit the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 119(e) and/or 120, where applicable, within this time period is considered a waiver of any benefit of such prior application(s) under 35 U.S.C. 119(e), 120, 121 and 365(c). A benefit claim filed after the required time period may be accepted if it is accompanied by a grantable petition to accept an unintentionally delayed benefit claim under 35 U.S.C. 119(e), 120, 121 and 365(c). The petition must be accompanied by (1) the reference required by 35 U.S.C. 120 or 119(e) and 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or (a)(5) to the prior application (unless previously submitted), (2) a surcharge under 37 CFR 1.17(t), and (3) a statement that the entire delay between the date the claim was due under 37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) or (a)(5) and the date the claim was filed was unintentional. The Director may require additional information where there is a question whether the delay was unintentional. The petition should be addressed to: Mail Stop Petition, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.

If the reference to the prior application was previously submitted within the time period set forth in 37 CFR 1.78(a), but not in the first sentence(s) of the specification or an application data sheet (ADS) as required by 37 CFR 1.78(a) (e.g., if the reference was submitted in an oath or declaration or the application transmittal letter), and the information concerning the benefit claim was recognized by the Office as shown by its inclusion on the first filing receipt, the petition under 37 CFR 1.78(a) and the surcharge under 37 CFR 1.17(t) are not required. Applicant is still required to submit the reference

in compliance with 37 CFR 1.78(a) by filing an amendment to the first sentence(s) of the specification or an ADS. See MPEP § 201.11.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1, 2, 5, 8, 10-12, 14, 17, 19-23, 30, 31 35-44, 46-52, 60, 61, 64-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman et al (US 2004/0261127 and hereafter referred to as "Freeman") in view of Lawler et al (US 5,699,107 and hereafter referred to as "Lawler") and Lappington et al (US 5,764,275 and hereafter referred to as "Lappington").

Regarding Claims 1, 37-41, 71-78, Freeman discloses a system providing interactive content to a user (Figure 1), said system comprising: a user reception device for the reception of broadcast signals to the user or a digital TV (Figure 1, 195), a video display or TV screen associated with the user reception device for displaying a user-perceptible form of the broadcast signals to the user (Figure 1, 195), a decoding device communicating with the user reception device or digital cable box or set top box with a TV (Figures 1 and 2, 25, 215), the decoding device or digital cable box or set top

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box being programmed to execute an interactive program written for the broadcast content (Figure 2 and Page 4, paragraph 0049), a server network device communicating with the decoding device (Figure 1, 5), the server network device being programmed to download segments of the interactive program (Page 4, paragraph 0044) to the decoding device (Figure 1, Page 4, paragraph 0044); a communication device communicating with the decoding device and with the server network device including a modem (Figure 1, Page 4, paragraph 0044, Page 9, paragraph 0126)); and a memory system communicating with the server network device and the decoding device or a program storage means or database (Page 4, paragraph 0045), the memory system storing segments of the interactive program (Page 4, paragraph 0045); wherein the interactive content is synchronized to segments of the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraph 0114, 0116) by events within the broadcast content or audio, video or graphic display are trigger points inserted in the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0116), wherein the triggers are inserted at pre-determined segments within the broadcast content and activate segments of the interactive program that are interrelated to the broadcast content being presented to the user during the pre-determined segments (Page 8, paragraph 0115, Figure 5), wherein the segments of the interactive program provide facts and information to the user, the facts and information being interrelated with the broadcast content being presented to the user during a predetermined segment of the broadcast (Page 8, paragraph 0114, Page 11, paragraphs 0147-0153). Regarding Claim 72, Freeman discloses inserted events activate particular segments of the interactive content interrelated to the particular

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segments of the broadcast content such that broadcast content and interrelated interactive content are displayed on the video display (Figure 2, Page 4, paragraph 0049, Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0117). Freeman discloses that an interactive program provides facts and information to a user (Page 8, paragraph 0114) and asking questions about future events of a program (Page 11, paragraphs 0147-0152). Freeman discloses asking questions but about content presented in future instead of displaying of facts and information provided to the user in a question and answer format, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question and is also silent on triggers that alert the user about another interactive program in the broadcast content different from the interactive program currently being presented to the user. Lawler discloses an interactive system, which displays programming to the user (Figure 1). Lawler discloses a trigger or tag which is broadcasted by the head end (Figure 1, 12) to the user for a particular show or program in the broadcast content that is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51). Lappington discloses an interactive system to create//program interactive data that develops a set of questions or informational statement to be sent to the viewer during a television broadcast (Column 5, lines 60-64). Lappington discloses that facts and information are provided to the user in a question and answer format (Column 9, lines 13-21, Column 2, lines 8-21, Column 5, lines 60-67, Column 6, lines 1-12, lines 51-64), the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Column 9, lines 22-24). Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include a trigger or tag which is reminds or alerts the user about a particular show or

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program is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51) as taught by Lawler in order to assist users in identifying the availability of future programs (Column 1, lines 29-31) as disclosed by Lawler. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include facts and information in a question and answer format (Column 9, lines 13-24, Column 2, lines 8-21, Column 5, lines 60-67, Column 6, lines 1-12, lines 51-64) as taught by Lappington in order to play a game, win prizes without a possibility of cheating (Column 2, lines 48-62, Column 3, lines 14-18) as disclosed by Lappington.

Regarding Claim 43, Freeman discloses a method of providing interactive content to a user (Page 4, paragraph 0049); the method comprising programming a processor to provide interactive content (Figure 1, 135), the interactive content being interrelated to pre-determined broadcast content (Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0117); inserting an event within the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0117), the event being inserted in the broadcast content at a pre-determined segment (Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0117), receiving a broadcast signal (Figure 1, 25), the broadcast signal comprising the broadcast content (Figure 1, 25); decoding the event as it is encountered in the broadcast content (Figure 2, 215), the decoded event activating a segment of the interactive content (Figure 2 and Page 4, paragraph 0049); and displaying both the broadcast content and the activated segment of the interactive content to the user on a video display (Figure 2, Page 4, paragraph 0049, Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0117); wherein the event activates a segment of the interactive content that is interrelated to the segment of the broadcast content in which the event is

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inserted (Page 8, paragraphs 0114, 0117), wherein the segments of the interactive program provide facts and information to the user, the facts and information being interrelated with the broadcast content being presented to the user during a predetermined segment of the broadcast (Page 8, paragraph 0114, Page 11, paragraphs 0147-0153). Freeman discloses asking questions but about content presented in future instead of displaying of facts and information provided to the user in a question and answer format, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question and is also silent on triggers that alert the user about another interactive program in the broadcast content different from the interactive program currently being presented to the user. Lawler discloses an interactive system, which displays programming to the user (Figure 1). Lawler discloses a trigger or tag which is broadcasted by the head end (Figure 1, 12) to the user for a particular show or program in the broadcast content that is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51). Lappington discloses an interactive system to create//program interactive data that develops a set of questions or informational statement to be sent to the viewer during a television broadcast (Column 5, lines 60-64). Lappington discloses that facts and information are provided to the user in a question and answer format (Column 9, lines 13-21, Column 2, lines 8-21, Column 5, lines 60-67, Column 6, lines 1-12, lines 51-64), the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Column 9, lines 22-24). Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include a trigger or tag which is reminds or alerts the user about a particular show or program is different from the program being

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presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51) as taught by Lawler in order to assist users in identifying the availability of future programs (Column 1, lines 29-31) as disclosed by Lawler. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include facts and information in a question and answer format (Column 9, lines 13-24, Column 2, lines 8-21, Column 5, lines 60-67, Column 6, lines 1-12, lines 51-64) as taught by Lappington in order to play a game, win prizes without a possibility of cheating (Column 2, lines 48-62, Column 3, lines 14-18) as disclosed by Lappington.

Regarding Claim 60, Freeman disclose a system (Figure 1) for providing to a user interactive enabling system (Figures 1, 2, 25) interactive content that is synchronized to broadcast content (Page 8, paragraph 0114), the system comprising an insertion device for inserting events into the broadcast content (Figure 1, 5), a transmission device for transmitting the broadcast content to the user interactive enabling system (Figure 1, 15, 150, 175); a server network device (Figure 1, 5) communicating with the user interactive enabling system (Figure 1, 25); and a memory system communicating with the server network device or a program storage means or database (Page 4, paragraph 0045), the memory system storing the interactive content (Page 4, paragraph 0045); wherein the inserted events are synchronized to particular segments of the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraph 0114) and activate particular segments of the interactive content interrelated to the particular segments of the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraph 0114) such that both the broadcast content and the interrelated interactive content are displayed on the user interactive enabling system

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(Page 8, paragraph 0114), wherein the segments of the interactive program provide facts and information to the user, the facts and information being interrelated with the broadcast content being presented to the user during a predetermined segment of the broadcast (Page 8, paragraph 0114). Freeman discloses asking questions but about content presented in future instead of displaying of facts and information provided to the user in a question and answer format, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question and is also silent on triggers that alert the user about another interactive program in the broadcast content different from the interactive program currently being presented to the user. Lawler discloses an interactive system, which displays programming to the user (Figure 1). Lawler discloses a trigger or tag which is broadcasted by the head end (Figure 1, 12) to the user for a particular show or program in the broadcast content that is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51). Lappington discloses an interactive system to create//program interactive data that develops a set of questions or informational statement to be sent to the viewer during a television broadcast (Column 5, lines 60-64). Lappington discloses that facts and information are provided to the user in a question and answer format (Column 9, lines 13-21, Column 2, lines 8-21, Column 5, lines 60-67, Column 6, lines 1-12, lines 51-64), the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Column 9, lines 22-24). Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include a trigger or tag which is reminds or alerts the user about a particular show or program is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51) as taught by Lawler in order to assist

users in identifying the availability of future programs (Column 1, lines 29-31) as disclosed by Lawler. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include facts and information in a question and answer format (Column 9, lines 13-24, Column 2, lines 8-21, Column 5, lines 60-67, Column 6, lines 1-12, lines 51-64) as taught by Lappington in order to play a game, win prizes without a possibility of cheating (Column 2, lines 48-62, Column 3, lines 14-18) as disclosed by Lappington.

Regarding Claims 2, 44, and 61, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1, 43, and 60 respectively. Freeman discloses that the interactive program written for the broadcast content comprises HTML pages or web pages (Page 9, paragraph 0124), the HTML pages comprising the interactive content (page 9, paragraph 0124, 0126), the HTML pages beings displayed to the user on the video display (Pages 9-10, paragraph 0127). It is inherent that web pages have HTML content. The Office acknowledges that the Claim 44 includes programming a processor to provide interactive content (Figure 1, 135) as disclosed by Freeman.

Regarding Claims 5, 46, and 64, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 2, Claim 43, and Claim 61 respectively. Freeman discloses that the HTML pages further comprise the broadcast content (Page 9-10, paragraph 0127). The Office acknowledges that the Claim 46 includes programming a processor to provide interactive content (Figure 1, 135) as disclosed by Freeman.

Regarding Claims 8 and 66, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1 and Claim 60 respectively. Freeman discloses the events within the broadcast content are time markers (Page 8, paragraphs 0114-0115).

Regarding Claims 10 and 67, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1 and Claim 65 respectively. Freeman discloses that the triggers comprise a URL (Page 8, 0114, Page 9, 0124), the URL comprising an Internet address (Page 8, 0114, Page 9, 0124).

Regarding Claim 11, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman discloses that the segments of the interactive program provide character insights to the user (Page 8, paragraph 0114), the character insights being interrelated with the broadcast content being presented to the user during predetermined segment of the broadcast or providing information of a baseball player that is currently at bat (Page 8, paragraph 0114).

Regarding Claim 12, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman disclose the segments of the interactive program provide comments to the user, the comments and observations being interrelated with the broadcast content being present to the user during the predetermined segment of broadcast (Page 8, paragraph 0114).

Regarding Claim 14, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman disclose the segments of the interactive program provide an opportunity for the user to predict what will happen at a later time in the program such as "who will win the game?"(Page 11, paragraphs 0147-0152).

Regarding Claim 17, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Lappington discloses that an interactive game is played in a question and answer format displayed (Column 9, lines 18-48, Figure 15), the answer being displayed automatically a pre-determined time interval after the question is displayed (Column 9, lines 49-59, Figure 15).

Regarding Claim 19, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman does not disclose that the user is provided with on-screen feedback about the user's answer. Lappington discloses that the user is provided with on-screen feedback about the user's answer (Column 9, lines 23-26).

Regarding Claim 20, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman does not disclose that the facts and information are provided to the user in a "true or false" question format, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question. Lappington discloses that the facts and information are provided to the user in a "true or false" question format (Column 9, lines 18-21), the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Column 9, lines 22-23).

Regarding Claim 21, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman does not disclose that rewards are given to users who answer the displayed questions correctly. Lappington discloses that rewards are given to users who answer the displayed questions correctly or that users who answer questions correctly will win prizes (Column 21, lines 2-9). It is inherent that that prizes are awarded to users if the interactive program award prizes of value and also that prizes are awarded to users who answer questions correctly and earn the most points.

Regarding Claim 22, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 21. Freeman does not disclose that rewards comprise a number of points. Lappington discloses that rewards comprise a number of points or points are given for each correct answer (Figure 15).

Regarding Claim 23, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 22. Freeman does not disclose that the same number of points is earned for each correct answer. Lappington discloses that the same number of points is earned for each correct answer or for Quick and Easy response options (Column 9, lines 31-32).

Regarding Claim 30, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 22. Freeman does not disclose that bonus points are hidden in particular interactive content such that only users who activate the particular interactive content receive the bonus points. Lappington discloses that bonus points are hidden in particular interactive content such that only users who activate the particular interactive content receive the bonus points or additional points are awarded if questions are correctly answered within a particular time (Column 9, lines 47-48).

Regarding Claim 31, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman does not disclose that a single pre-determined question corresponding to a particular trigger in the program content is provided to all users. Lappington discloses that a single pre-determined question corresponding to a particular trigger in the program content is provided to all users (Column 9, lines 8-10). Lappington defines questions as text that request input (Column 9 lines 18-19).

Therefore, Lappington asks a question to all players to determine level of skill to start the interactive question and answer session (Column 9, lines 8-10).

Regarding Claim 35, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman does not disclose that the questions are chosen based on the user's preferences. Lappington discloses that the questions are chosen based on the user's preferences (Column 9, lines 8-11).

Regarding Claim 36, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman discloses that different versions of interactive content may be selected by the user (Page 3, paragraphs 0031-0037).

Regarding Claims 42 and 79, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1 and 72. Freeman discloses that the decoding device further comprises a memory for storing interactive programs (Figure 2, 255, Figure 4, 475) and user information (Figure 2, 265).

Regarding Claims 47 and 65, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claims 43 and 60 respectively. Freeman discloses that the events within the broadcast content are triggers inserted in the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraph 0115) or inserting an event within the broadcast content comprises inserting a trigger within the broadcast content (Page 8, paragraph 0114).

Regarding Claims 48, 49 and 50, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 43. Freeman discloses receiving a broadcast signal comprising receiving the broadcast signal transmitted by a television broadcast station (Page 4,

paragraph 0044), a cable provider (Page 4, paragraph 0044), and/or satellite provide (Page 4, paragraph 0044) respectively to Claims 48, 49 and 50.

Regarding Claim 51, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 43. Freeman discloses decoding the event as it is encountered in the broadcast content (Page 9, paragraphs 0119, 0121) comprises programming a processor within a set-top box to decode a trigger inserted in the broadcast content (Page 9, paragraphs 0119, 0121).

Regarding Claim 52, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 43. Freeman discloses displaying both the broadcast content and the interrelated interactive content to the user on a video display (Page 4, paragraph 0049) comprises displaying the broadcast content in a reduced form within an HTML page on the video screen (Pages 9-10, paragraphs 0124, 0127).

Regarding Claims 68, 69, and 70, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 60. Freeman discloses that the transmission device is a television broadcast station transmitter (Figure 1, 175), a transmission cable (Figure 1, 150), and/or a satellite transmitter (figure 1, 15) respectively to Claims 68, 69, and 70.

7. Claims 3, 4, 45, 53, 62, 63 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 2, 44, 61 above, and further in view of Weinstein et al (US 6,604,242 and hereafter referred to as "Weinstein").

Regarding Claims 3, 45, and 62, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 2, Claim 44, and Claim 61 respectively. Freeman discloses that the interactive program further comprises JAVA enabled browser associated with web pages. Freeman does not disclose that the interactive program comprises JavaScript code associated with the HTML pages, the JavaScript code providing interactive functionality within the HTML pages. Weinstein discloses that the interactive program comprises JavaScript code associated with the HTML pages (Column 7, lines 2-4, lines 25-31), the JavaScript code providing interactive functionality within the HTML pages. It is inherent that the JavaScript code provides interactive functionality. The Office acknowledges that Claim 45 include programming a processor to provide interactive content (Figure 1, 135) as disclosed by Freeman. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington for interactive programs to comprise JavaScript code associated with the HTML pages to provide interactive programs (Column 7, lines 2-4, lines 25-31) as taught by Weinstein in order to provide a unified interface to combine both the broadcast and interactive features (Column 2, lines 9-22) as disclosed by Weinstein.

Regarding Claims 4, 53, and 63, Freeman, Lawler Lappington and Weinstein disclose all the limitations of Claim 3, Claim 52 and Claim 62 respectively. Freeman does not disclose that the interactive functionality comprises user-selectable operators for selecting different interactive functions. Weinstein discloses that the interactive functionality comprises user-selectable operators for selecting different interactive functions (Figures 2a, 2b, 2c).

8. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Valdez, Jr. (US 6,426,778 and hereafter referred to as "Valdez").

Regarding Claim 13, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman, Lawler and Lappington does not disclose that the segments of the interactive program provide the user's status in a fan club, the fan club being interrelated to the broadcast content. Valdez discloses that the segments of the interactive program provide the user's status in a fan club or allowing a viewer to access to the fan club information (Column 14, lines 50-65), the fan club being interrelated to the broadcast content (Column 14, lines 57-60). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to include details of a fan club including the user's status (Column 14, lines 50-65) as taught by Valdez in order to provide a system that allows a user to associate interactive data with a video presentation (Column 3, lines 42-44).

9. Claims 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Ellis et al (US 2004/0261125 and hereafter referred to as "Ellis").

Regarding Claim 15, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman, Lawler and Lappington do not disclose that the segments of the interactive program provide questions to the user about past events in a program. Ellis

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discloses wherein the segments of the interactive program provide questions to the user about past events in a program (Figures 4 and 5). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to include questions about the past events in a program (Figures 4 and 5) as taught by Ellis in order to maintain viewers to a particular channel (Page 1, paragraphs 0018-0019) as disclosed by Ellis.

10. Claims 24, 25, 27, 33, 34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Kohorn (US 5,508,731).

Regarding Claim 24, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 22. Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose the number of points is directly proportional to the difficulty of the question. Kohorn discloses that the number of points is directly proportional to the difficulty of the question (Column 40, lines 32-36; Column 40, lines 46-54). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify the number of points given proportional to the difficulty of question (Column 40, lines 32-36; Column 40, lines 46-54) as taught by Kohorn in order to include a broader participant audience (Column 1, lines 60-66).

Regarding Claim 25, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 22. Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose the number of points is deducted for each incorrect answer. Kohorn discloses that the number of points is deducted for each incorrect answer (Column 41, lines 31-33). It would have

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been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to deduct the number of points for each incorrect answer (Column 40, lines 32-36; Column 40, lines 46-54) as taught by Kohorn in order to include a broader participant audience (Column 1, lines 60-66).

Regarding Claim 27, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 22. Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose the points are redeemable for merchandise. Kohorn discloses that the points are redeemable for merchandise or are rewarded due to scoring means (Column 18, lines 53-55). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to redeem the number of points for merchandise (Column 18, lines 53-55) as taught by Kohorn in order to include a broader participant audience (Column 1, lines 60-66).

Regarding Claim 33, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman in view of Lappington does not disclose that the questions are chosen pseudo-randomly. Kohorn discloses that the questions are chosen pseudo-randomly or based on the performance of the user (Column 15, lines 36-44). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to choose the questions pseudo-randomly (Column 15, lines 36-44) as taught by Kohorn in order to include a broader participant audience (Column 1, lines 60-66).

Regarding Claim 34, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose that the

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questions are chosen based on the user's past performance. Kohorn discloses that the questions are chosen based on the performance of the user (Column 15, lines 36-44). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to choose the questions based on past performance of the user (Column 15, lines 36-44) as taught by Kohorn in order to include a broader participant audience (Column 1, lines 60-66).

11. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Furet.

Regarding Claim 26, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 22. Freeman discloses that information can be displayed on a HTML page (Page 8, paragraph 0114, page 9, paragraph 0124). Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose that points are continuously displayed on the HTML page. Furet discloses that the user's score or points are continuously displayed on the television (Page 14, paragraph 0371). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to display points continuously (Page 14, paragraphs 0365, 0371) as taught by Furet in order to allow the user to actively participate (Page 4, paragraphs 0141) as disclosed by Furet.

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12. Claim 28 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Wade et al (US 2002/0165764 and hereafter referred to as "Wade").

Regarding Claim 28, Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose that points are redeemable for additional plays. Wade discloses that points are redeemable for additional plays (Page 1, paragraph 0010, Page 3, paragraph 0033). Wade discloses that users can access a games feature. It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to be able to redeem earned points to play again (Page 1, 0010, Page 3, paragraph 0033) as taught by Wade in order gain more customers for a merchandizing center web site for products (Page 1, paragraph 0010).

13. Claim 29 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 22 above, and further in view of Forrest et al (US 6,267,379 and hereafter referred to as "Forrest").

Regarding Claim 29, Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington do not disclose that user is ranked according to the number of points accumulated by the user. Forrest discloses that the user is ranked according to the number points accumulated by the user or team (Figure 11). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to rank the users according to the number of points (Figure 11) as taught by Forrest in order to provide a clear view of who is winning the game.

14. Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Ellis (US 2004/0117831 and hereafter referred to as "Ellis2").

Regarding Claim 32, Freeman, Lawler and Lappington disclose all the limitations of Claim 1. Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington does not disclose that the questions are chosen from a pool of questions, the pool of questions being stored in the memory system. Ellis2 discloses that questions are chosen from a pool of questions (Abstract, page 24, paragraph 0247), the pool of questions being stored in the memory system or trivia questions stored in database or other storage facility (Abstract). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman in view of Lawler and Lappington to chose the questions from a pool of questions (Abstract, page 24, paragraph 0247) and store the pool of questions in the memory system (Abstract) as taught by Ellis in order to provide customized programming features for customers (Page 1, paragraphs 0006, 0008).

15. Claims 54-59 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Zigmond et al (US 6,698,020 and hereafter referred to as "Zigmond") in view of Freeman, Lawler and Matheny et al (US 2004/0205810 and hereafter referred to as "Matheny").

Regarding Claim 54, Zigmond discloses a method for selling advertising time during a broadcast program (Column 8, lines 65-67, Column 9, lines 1-9) by associating

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advertised products and services with broadcast content or advertisement source cooperating with the operators of programming (Column, 9, lines 5-8); the method comprising: providing advertising content (Figure 7, 62), the advertising content being interrelated to pre-determined broadcast content (Column 12, lines 60-67, Column 13, lines 1-5); inserting an event within the broadcast content (Column 8, lines 38-54), the event being inserted in a pre-determined segment of the broadcast content (Column 8, lines 55-63), the pre-determined segment of the broadcast content being interrelated to pre-determined advertising content (Column 12, lines 60-67, Column 13, lines 1-5), and receiving a fee for displaying the activated pre-determined advertising content to the user on the video display (Column 1, lines 36-39). Zigmond does not disclose decoding the event as it is encountered in the broadcast content, the decoded event activating the pre-determined advertising content; event also being inserted to alert the user about another broadcast program in the broadcast content different from the broadcast program currently being presented to the user, displaying both the broadcast content and the activated pre-determined advertising content to a user on a video display, facts and information provided to the user in a question and answer format or questions, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question. Freeman discloses decoding the event as it is encountered in the broadcast content (Figure 2, 215), the decoded event activating the pre-determined advertising content (Page 2, paragraph 0016, Page 8, paragraph 0116); displaying both the broadcast content and the activated pre-determined advertising content to a user on a video display (Page 2, paragraph 0016, Pages 9-10, paragraph 0127, Pages 11-12, paragraph 0168). Freeman

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discloses the segments or predetermined advertising content of the interactive program provide facts and information to the user, the facts and information being interrelated with the broadcast content being presented to the user during a predetermined segment of the broadcast (Page 2, paragraph 0016, Pages 9-10, paragraph 0127, Pages 11-12, paragraph 0168). Lawler discloses an interactive system, which displays programming to the user (Figure 1). Lawler discloses an event or tag which is broadcasted by the head end (Figure 1, 12) to the user for a particular show or program in the broadcast content that is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51). Matheny discloses a communication system that broadcasts a video signal to a receiver to display programs that have triggers which allow viewers to answer questions about the program which can be a commercial (Pages 1-2, paragraph 0017-0023). Matheny discloses that the display of facts and information provided to the user in a question and answer format or questions, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Page 1, paragraphs 0010, 0016, Page 2, paragraphs 0022-0023), the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Page 1, paragraphs 0010, 0016, Page 2, paragraph 0022). It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Zigmond to decode the event when encountering broadcast content (Figure 2, 215) to activate advertising content, and to display both broadcast and advertising content (Pages 9-10, paragraph 0127) and discloses the segments or predetermined advertising content of the interactive program provide facts and information to the user, the facts and information being interrelated with the broadcast content being presented to the user during a

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predetermined segment of the broadcast (Page 2, paragraph 0016, Pages 9-10, paragraph 0127, Pages 11-12, paragraph 0168) as taught by Freeman in order to provide personalized interactive programming (Page 1, paragraph 0007). Therefore, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Freeman to include a event or tag which is reminds or alerts the user about another show or program in the broadcast content is different from the program being presented to the user (Column 12, lines 1-51) as taught by Lawler in order to assist users in identifying the availability of future programs (Column 1, lines 29-31) as disclosed by Lawler. Therefore, it would have been at the time the invention was made to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Zigmond to include the display of facts and information provided to the user in a question and answer format or questions, the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Page 1, paragraphs 0010, 0016, Page 2, paragraphs 0022-0023), the user inputting an answer in response to a displayed question (Page 1, paragraphs 0010, 0016, Page 2, paragraph 0022) as disclosed by Matheny in order to encourage viewers to watch commercials (Page 1, paragraph 0009) as disclosed by Matheny.

Regarding Claim 55, Zigmond, Freeman, Lawler and Matheny disclose all the limitations of Claim 54. Freeman discloses providing advertising content comprises a processor to provide advertising content within an HTML page or web pages (Page 2, paragraph 0016, Page 9, paragraph 0124), the HTML pages comprising the interactive content (page 9, paragraph 0124, 0126), the HTML pages beings displayed to the user

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on the video display (Pages 9-10, paragraph 0126). It is inherent that web pages have HTML content.

Regarding Claim 56, Zigmond, Freeman, Lawler and Matheny disclose all the limitations of Claim 54. Zigmond discloses inserting an event within the broadcast content comprises inserting a trigger within the broadcast content (Column 8, lines 38-54).

Regarding Claim 57, Zigmond, Freeman, Lawler and Matheny disclose all the limitations of Claim 54. Zigmond does not disclose decoding the event as it is encountered in the broadcast content, comprises programming a processor within a set-top box to decode a trigger inserted in the broadcast content. Freeman discloses decoding the event as it is encountered in the broadcast content (Figure 2, 215), comprises programming a processor within a set-top box (Figure 2) to decode a trigger inserted in the broadcast content (Figure 2, 215).

Regarding Claim 58, Zigmond, Freeman, Lawler and Matheny disclose all the limitations of Claim 54. Matheny discloses that the advertising content comprises user-selectable operators or icons, the user selectable operator providing interactive functions (Page 3, paragraph 0030).

Regarding Claim 59, Zigmond, Freeman, Lawler and Matheny disclose all the limitations of Claim 58. Matheny discloses interactive functions comprise product related textual information and access to a website (Pages 2-3, paragraphs 0029, 0030, 0033).

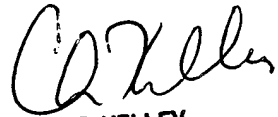
Conclusion

16. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Farzana E. Hossain whose telephone number is 571-272-5943. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Christopher Grant can be reached on 571-272-7294. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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